What is claimed is:

1. An outer surface-inspecting method for inspecting an outer surface of an inspection area having repeated patterns through comparison with a predetermined master pattern, said method comprising dividing said inspection area into a plurality of matrix-like view areas, using, as a master pattern, mutually different standard pattern portions for respective different edge shapes of said inspection area contained in said divided view areas, said standard pattern portions involving said respective edge portions, and inspecting the outer surface of the inspection area by comparing the standard pattern portions to the view areas corresponding to the standard pattern portions.

2. The outer surface-inspecting method set forth in claim 1, wherein the inspection area is rectangular, said view areas are defined by dividing the rectangular inspection area in horizontal and vertical directions, and said standard pattern portions comprise at least two kind of corner pattern portions each to be applied to corner portions of the inspection area and involving such edges of the inspection area as defining a corner portion, and at least one kind of side pattern portion to be applied between the corner portions of the inspection area and containing a part of an edge between the edge portions.

3. The outer surface-inspecting method set forth in claim 2, wherein at least two kinds of the corner pattern portions comprise four kinds of corner pattern portions to be applied to four corners of the inspection area, respectively, said side pattern portion comprises four kinds of side pattern portions to be applied along four sides of the inspection area, respectively, said standard pattern portions further comprises one kind of a central pattern portion not containing an edge of the inspection area, and thereby said standard pattern portions comprise totally nine kinds of the standard pattern portions.

4. The outer surface-inspecting method set forth in claim 1, wherein an object to be inspected is a semiconductor chip.

5. A master pattern to be used for comparison with an outer surface of an

inspection area having repeated patterns for the purpose of inspecting said inspection area, said master pattern comprising a plurality of mutually different standard pattern portions for respectively different edge shapes of said inspection area contained in a plurality of matrix-like view areas, said view areas being obtained by dividing said inspection area, wherein the outer surface of the inspection area is to be inspected by comparing the standard pattern portions to the outer surfaces of the view areas corresponding to the respective standard pattern portions.

6. The master pattern set forth in claim 5, wherein the inspection area is rectangular, said view areas are defined by dividing the rectangular inspection area in horizontal and vertical directions, and said standard pattern portions comprise at least two kind of corner pattern portions each to be applied to corner portions of the inspection area and involving such edges of the inspection area as defining a corner portion, and at least one kind of side pattern portion to be applied between the corner portions of the inspection area and containing a part of an edge between the edge portions.

7. The master pattern forth in claim 6, wherein at least two kinds of the corner pattern portions comprise four kinds of corner pattern portions to be applied to four corners of the inspection area, respectively, said side pattern portion comprises four kinds of side pattern portions to be applied along four sides of the inspection area, respectively, said standard pattern portions further comprises one kind of a central pattern portion not containing an edge of the inspection area, and thereby said standard pattern portions comprise totally nine kinds of the standard pattern portions.

8. The master pattern forth in claim 5, wherein an object to be inspected is a semiconductor chip.

9. An outer surface-inspecting apparatus used to inspect an outer surface of an inspection area having repeated patterns, said outer surface-inspecting apparatus comprising a master pattern, said master pattern comprising a plurality of mutually different standard pattern portions for respectively different edge shapes of said inspection area

contained in a plurality of matrix-like view areas, said view areas being obtained by dividing said inspection area, wherein the outer surface of the inspection area is to be inspected by comparing the standard pattern portions to the outer surfaces of the view areas corresponding to the respective standard pattern portions.